

DECREASING SUPPORT FOR THE UKRAINIAN CAUSE IN MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS AND FORUMS

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In a few weeks, the position taken by the countries regarding the conflict in Ukraine has shown relevant changes. At the vote of the United Nations Assembly to demand that Russia cease hostilities in Ukraine, held on March 24, the result against Moscow was compelling. Some 140 countries out of 196 with the right to vote, favored the cease of hostilities. The G7 countries led this position, which was accompanied by all of Europe and Latin America, but also many countries in Africa and Asia. Some 38 countries refrained - it meant a favorable attitude towards Russia in political terms-, 5 rejected it and 13 were absent from the vote.

This result coincided with the one reached in the first vote in the UN Assembly condemning the Russian invasion of Ukraine on March 2, when 141 countries voted in favor, 35 abstained and only 5 voted against the condemnation. In this vote and the one that took place 22 days later, in the same area, there were practically no differences: the votes rejecting the Russian position went from 141 to 140, the abstentions grew from 35 to 38 and the negative ones regarding the resolution were repeated exactly. Between these two voting sessions, there was another vote in the UN Human Rights Council where Russia was condemned for violating human rights in Ukraine, and one more in the International Atomic Energy Agency. In both cases, resolutions adverse to Russia were voted in majority.

An important change begins to appear eleven days later, in the third vote of the UN General Assembly, which was intended to separate Russia from the Human Rights Council of the organization. The votes against Russia in this resolution fell from 140 to 97, the abstentions grew from 38 to 51 and the negative votes from 5 to 24. The turnaround occurred in the regional powers of the developing world: Brazil and Mexico in Latin America, Nigeria and Egypt in Africa, and Saudi Arabia and Indonesia in Asia. These countries abandoned their rejection of Russia and decided to abstain, dragging votes from their respective areas of

influence. For example, four of the five Gulf monarchies followed Saudi Arabia's shift.

It is worth mentioning that China, which had abstained in previous votes, now rejected the motion opposed to Moscow, while India, South Africa and Pakistan avoided condemning Russia. It should be noted that China, India, Pakistan and South Africa never voted against Moscow: in all votes, they either abstained or voted against the motions. On April 20, the meeting of the Ministers of Economy and Finance of the G20 took place, the group that brings together developed and emerging powers and has met annually since 2008. It consists of 19 countries plus the European Union, member number 20. The Biden Administration and the EU authorities worked hard in the previous days so that Russia was expelled from the group, but this did not have a majority consensus. The countries of Latin America, Africa and Asia of the group, which are nine, opposed. Days later, the US government and the European Union developed a softer attitude: the boycott against Russia. That is, the leaders who left the place when the Moscow representative spoke. The G7, made up of the 7 largest economies living in liberal democracy, and which have materialized and led support, economic and military assistance, and diplomatic backing for Ukraine in the war, unexpectedly split their stance: the representatives of Japan, Germany and Italy remained in their places when the Russian minister spoke. The failure of Western leadership was evident. They tried to cover it up with the photo of those who were not there when the Russian official spoke: the representatives of the United States, Canada, Great Britain and the European Union. The French minister also left, although he later justified his absence during the Russian delegate's participation due to agenda reasons. In other words, after the demands for the cessation of hostilities voted in the United Nations Assembly, which was a heavy defeat for Russia, this position gradually weakened in the international diplomatic arena, until it became a clear minority in the G20 arena, during the summit of their economy ministers on April 20.

In the Latin American sphere, the shift in positions occurs on April 7, when the UN Assembly voted to separate Russia from the Human Rights Council, and Brazil and Mexico abstained. But Argentina kept voting against Moscow. However, within the G20, the mentioned countries are the only three Latin American nations that are members of the group that unified their position there, first rejecting the removal of Russia from the group and then refusing to

participate in the boycott against it. On April 21, the Organization of American States (OAS) voted to expel Russia as a permanent observer country of the organization. The resolution had 25 votes in favor, 8 abstentions, one absentee and no votes against.

There has been a majority rejection of Moscow, which shows the alignment with the position of the United States and Canada. However, among the 8 abstentions were the three largest economies in Latin America: Brazil, Mexico and Argentina. But unlike what happened in other regions of the world, where the change of vote of this type of country regionally dragged others - as happened with Saudi Arabia, which when voting differently from the United States added four of the remaining Gulf monarchies -, this did not happen in Latin America. The remaining five abstention votes were from Honduras, El Salvador, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Bolivia. Perhaps Washington's regional influence explains this result.

To conclude, since the Russian invasion that began on February 24, support for the Ukrainian cause, endorsed by NATO, has been gradually reducing its support in multilateral organizations and forums. Between March 24 and April 4, there was an important shift in terms of the rejection of Moscow in the UN Assembly, reducing the votes against Russia from 140 to 97. At the G20 Economy and Finance Ministers Summit, only five of its members participated in the boycott of the Russian representative, leaving the room when he spoke. Finally, in the inter-American sphere, Mexico, Brazil and Argentina rejected the initiative to exclude Russia from the group, and they also rejected the OAS as an observer, which had majority support.